



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2018-0694; Directorate Identifier 2016-SW-068-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for Airbus Helicopters Model EC225LP helicopters. This proposed AD would require repetitive inspections of each life raft inflation cylinder percussion system bellcrank (bellcrank). This proposed AD is prompted by reports of jammed bellcranks. The actions of this proposed AD are intended to prevent an unsafe condition on these products.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Docket:** Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.
- **Fax:** 202-493-2251.
- **Mail:** Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.,

Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2018-0694; or in person at Docket

Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information.

The street address for Docket Operations (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at

http://www.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support_73.html. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Hatfield, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email david.hatfield@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

Discussion

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD No. 2016-0200, dated October 11, 2016 (AD 2016-0200), to correct an unsafe condition for Airbus Helicopters Model EC 225 LP helicopters. EASA advises of a report of the left-hand and right-hand bellcranks becoming jammed. EASA states an investigation determined the bellcranks were jammed by the accumulation of a foreign coating material in the bellcrank hole. EASA further states that

investigation of an additional incident of a jammed bellcrank determined that corrosion in the bellcrank hole caused the jam. This condition, according to EASA, could result in failure of the life rafts to release in an emergency and subsequent injury to occupants during an otherwise survivable accident. To address this, EASA AD 2016-0200 requires repetitive cleaning and lubrication of each bellcrank and pivot link.

FAA's Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of France and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with France, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other helicopters of the same type design.

Related Service Information

We reviewed Airbus Helicopters Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05A050, Revision 0, dated July 22, 2016, which contains procedures for cleaning and lubricating each bellcrank and pivot link of the life raft inflation cylinder percussion system and removing any corrosion if necessary.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require, before further flight and thereafter at intervals not exceeding 6 months, cleaning and lubricating each bellcrank and pivot link.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 5 helicopters of U.S. Registry.

At an average labor rate of \$85 per work-hour, we estimate that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD. Cleaning and lubricating both bellcranks and pivot links would require about 16 work-hours, and required materials costs would be minimal, for a cost of \$1,360 per helicopter and \$6,800 for the U.S. fleet per inspection cycle.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

Airbus Helicopters: Docket No. FAA-2018-0694; Product Identifier 2016-SW-068-AD.

(a) Applicability

This AD applies to Airbus Helicopters Model EC225 LP helicopters with a life raft installed, certificated in any category.

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as a jammed bellcrank in a life raft jettison inflation cylinder percussion system (bellcrank). This condition could result in failure of a life raft to release in an emergency and subsequent injury to occupants.

(c) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE Federal Register].

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

(e) Required Actions

Before further flight, and thereafter at intervals not to exceed 6 months:

(1) Clean each bellcrank and pivot link and inspect each bellcrank hole for corrosion. If there is any corrosion in a bellcrank hole:

(i) Remove the corrosion without exceeding a maximum depth of 0.1 millimeter (0.004 inch).

(ii) Clean each pivot link using 400-grain abrasive paper.

(iii) Apply corrosion protectant (Alodine 1200 or equivalent) to each bellcrank hole.

(2) Lubricate each bellcrank hole with grease before assembling the bellcrank.

(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Section, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: David Hatfield, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Section, Rotorcraft Standards Branch, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email 9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

(g) Additional Information

(1) Airbus Helicopters Emergency Alert Service Bulletin No. 05A050, Revision 0, dated July 22, 2016, which is not incorporated by reference, contains additional information about the subject of this AD. For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at http://www.helicopters.airbus.com/website/en/ref/Technical-Support_73.html. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

(2) The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2016-0200, dated October 11, 2016. You may view the EASA AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> in the AD Docket.

(h) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 2564 Life Raft.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on July 23, 2018.

Scott A. Horn,

Deputy Director for Regulatory Operations,
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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